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PASTORAL LETTER.

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Admonition and warning to y<sup>e</sup> faithfull ch<sup>l</sup> of use & reception  
of Dr. Geddes' New Translation of y<sup>e</sup> Bible. p. 22.

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Walmesley (C.) Bishop of Ramna

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## PASTORAL LETTER

FROM

CHARLES BISHOP OF RAMA,

WILLIAM BISHOP OF ACANTHOS,

AND

JOHN BISHOP OF CENTURIÆ,

VICARS APOSTOLIC,

TO ALL THE FAITHFUL,

CLERGY AND LAITY

OF THE

WESTERN, NORTHERN AND LONDON DISTRICTS.

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M,DCC,XCIII.





**CHARLES BISHOP OF RAMA, VICAR  
APOSTOLIC, to all the FAITHFUL, CLERGY  
and LAITY, of the WESTERN DISTRICT.**

**WILLIAM BISHOP OF ACANTHOS,  
VICAR APOSTOLIC, to all the FAITHFUL,  
CLERGY and LAITY of the NORTHERN  
DISTRICT.**

**JOHN BISHOP OF CENTURIÆ, VICAR  
APOSTOLIC, to all the FAITHFUL, CLERGY  
and LAITY, of the LONDON DISTRICT.**

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN,

**N**OTWITHSTANDING that our holy mother the Church has nothing more at heart than her own internal peace and a perfect union amongst all her children, yet, being sensible that these blessings can only be secured

**B**

by

by a strict adherence to *the faith once delivered*\*, and by a firm support of that spiritual authority which Jesus Christ has committed to her, hence she has ever been watchful to suppress such errors or practices as have seemed to threaten her belief, her jurisdiction or her discipline. Hence her holy fathers and her doctors have ever opposed those men who have arisen speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them†, and have set up a wall for the house of Israel § in those venerable writings, which are still in our hands. Finally, hence the apostles, and their successors the bishops of the Church||, whose particular duty this is¶, have at all times watched over their charge, and have made head against the ravening wolves that enter not sparing the flock of Christ\*\*.

Having been regularly called, however unworthy, to this high ministry, we, of course,

\* Jude c. 1. v. 3.

† Mat. c. 18. v. 17. ibid. c. 28. vv. 19 and 20. John c. 20. v. 21. Heb. c. 13. v. 17.

‡ Acts c. 20. v. 30. and do now the Church

§ Ezech. c. 13. v. 5. and do now the Church

|| Council of Trent. Sess. 23. c. 4. and do now the Church

¶ Acts c. 20. v. 28.

\*\* Ibid. v. 29. and do now the Church

become liable to that duty of zeal and watchfulness which is attached to it. If it is not excusable in us pastors to be ignorant, when the sheep, intrusted to us, are devoured by the infernal wolf\*, as the Fathers of the last General Council have declared, how much less excusable would it be in us to see the sheep devoured, and to hold our peace. The truth is, we cannot but bear in mind that awful charge of the apostle in the passage referred to above, and which is addressed to all in our station; *Take heed to yourselves and to the whole flock wherein the Holy Ghost has placed you bishops, to rule the Church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood†.* Again we cannot, without trembling, hear that severe threat of the prophet, and which we learn from the Church is applicable to each one of us‡; *If the watchman see the sword coming, and sound not the trumpet, and the people look not to themselves, and the sword come, and cut off a soul from amongst them: he indeed is taken away in*

\* "Certissimum est non admitti pastoris excusationem si lupus oves comedit & pastor nescit." Concil. Trid. Sess. 6. Decret de reform. c. 1.

† Acts c. 20. v. 28.

‡ See Counc. Trent, Sess. 6. c. 1. de ref. in marg.

*his iniquities: but I will require his blood at the hands of the watchman.—So thou, O Son of man, I have appointed thee a watchman to the house of Israel.*\*

At no time, Beloved Brethren, have the peculiar duties of pastors been more pressingly requisite than they are at present, because at no time, has the Church been more violently, more extensively, or more dangerously attacked than it is now. In fact, the capital error that is now propagated, consists in a denial of that authority in the pastors of the Church, which Christ has established for the correction of errors in general: and the innovations in discipline, which are now attempted, and in the manner they are attempted, aim at nothing less than a total subversion of the government and constitution of the Church: which spiritual authority and which government having been established and continued by Christ himself†, it follows that to rise up against

\* Ezech. c. 33. *verses 6 and 7.*

† Isai. c. 9. v. 7. Luke c. 1. v. 32. Mat. c. 16. v. 18. ibid. c. 28. vv. 18, 19, 20.—Our blessed Saviour is introduced by St. Augustine, commenting upon his own text, in the following manner: “ Give ear ye Jews and Gentiles, ye men of high and of low degree, *My kingdom*

against them cannot but be an attempt of the most criminal nature, and of the most fatal tendency.

The seclusion of the English Catholics from many temptations to which a great part of their brethren abroad are exposed, the edifying example of their fathers and predecessors, and the good and virtuous education, which they have, in general, received, ought with the divine grace, to have preserved them from the prevailing contagion. But though we have the consolation to observe that the greater part of our flocks, *stand fast and hold the traditions which they have received\**, avoiding the profane novelties of words, and the oppositions of knowledge, *falsely so called . . . .* by means of which *some have erred concerning the faith†*, yet we cannot conceal that these profane novelties have unhappily found entrance to some of them, as too plainly appears by diverse writings which have been put forth

“ *is not of this world*: nevertheless, as, *I am a King, I therefore have my own kingdom, my own ministers, my own officers, and my own system of government.*”

“ *Be not afraid that I should obstruct your government.*”

St. Aug. Tract. 15. in Joan. &c.

\* 2 Thessal. c. 2. v. 15.

† 1 Tim. c. 6. verses 20, 21.

of

of late. We write not these things to shame you: but we admonish you [as our dearest children: for if you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet not many fathers\*.

The errors, which we find it, in the first place, necessary to guard you against, relate to the origin and establishment of episcopal authority, which has been instituted by Christ for preserving the faith and for governing the Church. It has been falsely asserted, that it is necessary bishops should be elected by their respective clergy and people, and that the Head of the Church has no right to interfere in their appointment or confirmation. You have accordingly been invited to resist the Chief Pontiff, in the discharge of his duty of appointing bishops, and, in defiance of your present lawful pastors, who have been so appointed, and have entered in by the door of the sheepfold†, you have been called upon to elect pastors for yourselves, who by acceding to such an election, would not enter by the door, but would climb up another way, and thus would prove themselves to be thieves and robbers, who come only to steal, and to kill, and to destroy†.

\* 1 Cor. c. 4. verses 14, 15.

† John c. 10. v. 2.

‡ Ibid. verses 1. and 10.

But it is incumbent upon us, Dear Brethren, to assure you, that, in following this pernicious advice, you would have rushed into schism. The Church alone has, and ever had authority to determine the regulations and discipline to be observed previous to the actual appointment of bishops, all which in the last general council she left to remain as they then were \*. The Church alone has, and ever had authority to appoint bishops in order to govern determinate portions of the flock of Christ, no less than to consecrate them †: and, at present, this right and authority is so uncontestedly acknowledged to reside solely in the head Bishop ‡, that his Holiness

\* " Omnes vero & singulos qui ad promotionem præficiendorum (episcoporum) quocumque jus, quamcumque ratione, à sede apostolica habent, aut alioquin operam suam præstant, nihil in iis pro presenti temporum ratione innovando, hortatur sancta synodus, &c." Conc. Trid. Sess. 24. cap. 1. de reform.

+ " Si quis dixerit ordines (proinde episcopalem ordinem) ab ipsis (episcopis) collatos sine populi, vel potestatis secularis consensu irritos esse, aut eos, qui nec ab ecclesiastica & canonica potestate rite ordinati, nec missi sunt, sed aliunde veniunt, legitimos esse verbi et sacramentorum ministros; anathema sit." Conc. Trid. Sess. 23. can. 7.

+ " Ut ipse summus Pontifex, plena totius negotii ac personarum notitia habita, pro gregis Dominici commode

has lately declared that if any bishop or metropolitan shall arrogate to himself the right of instituting bishops, it will be incumbent upon him, in virtue of his apostolical function, to pronounce both the bishop who institutes, and the person so instituted, to be schismatics, and their acts (of jurisdiction) to be void of all effect \*.

Nor

“ commodo de illis . . . . Ecclesiæ possit utilius pro-  
“ videre.” *Ibid. Sess. 24. c. 1. de reform.* — “ Eadem  
“ sancta synodus . . . non potest non commemorare  
“ nihil magis ecclesiæ Dei esse necessarium, quam ut bea-  
“ tissimus Pontifex, quam solicitudem universæ ecclesiæ,  
“ ex munera officio, debet, eam hic potissimum im-  
“ pendat, ut . . . . idoneos pastores singulis ecclesiæ præ-  
“ ficiat.” *Ibid.*

“ Romanus Pontifex, . . . . in ipsos absentes, prout  
“ cujusque major aut minor contumacia exegerit, suæ  
“ supremæ sedis auctoritate, animadvertere, et ecclesiæ  
“ ipsis de pastoribus utilioribus, providere poterit, sicut  
“ in Domino noverit expedire.” *Ibid. Sess. 6. cap. 1.  
de reform.*

“ Si quis dixerit episcopos, qui auctoritate Romani  
“ Pontificis assumuntur, non esse legitimos & veros epis-  
“ copos, sed figmentum humanum; anathema sit.” *Ibid.  
Sess. 28. can. 8.*

\* In Brevi Feb. 23, 1791, p. 15. Item in Brevi  
Apr. 13, 1791, p. 16. “ Hæc porro jurisdictionis con-  
“ ferendæ potestas, ex novâ disciplinâ à pluribus sacerulis  
“ receptâ a conciliis generalibus, et ab ipsis concordatis  
“ confirmata

Nor is it only in the article of confirming bishops that the rights of the chief Pastor are schismatically invaded, by persons, who still boast of adhering to his communion: but it has moreover been asserted that the Vicar of Christ, as he has been termed by general councils \*, and the successor of him whom Jesus Christ has commissioned to feed his whole flock, sheep as well as lambs, without any exception †, has no pretensions to communicate

“ confirmatā, ne ad metropolitanos quidem potest ullo modo attinere, utpote quā illuc rēversa, unde decesserat, unice residet pēnes apostolicā sedem, ita ut hodie Romanus Pontifex, ex munēris sui officio, pastores singulī ecclesiā p̄ficiat; ut verbis utamur Concilii Tridentini. *Seff. 24. c. 1. de ref.* Adeoque legitima consecratio nulla fiat in ecclesiā catholicā universā, nisi ex apostolice sedis mandato.” *Ibid. p. 30.*

\* *Conc. Flor. in Decret. Union. Conc. Trid. Seff.*

6. cap. 1. de ref. *Sc.*

+ “ De toto mundo unus Petrus eligitur, qui et universarum gentium vocationi, & omnibus apostolis, cunctisque ecclesiæ patribus p̄ponatur, ut quamvis in populo Dei multi sacerdotes sint, multique pastores, omnes tamen proprie regat Petrus, quos principaliter regat et Christus.” *S. Leo, Serm. 3. de Assun.*

“ Tu princeps episcoporum . . . . Tu es cui claves traditæ cui oves creditæ sunt . . . . Habent illi assig- natos greges singuli singulos: tibi universi crediti, unus;

municate a portion of his spiritual authority to the Apostolical Vicars, who, in conformity with the general discipline of the Church in similar circumstances, are your present lawful ecclesiastical superiors: the authority of his briefs has also been depreciated and represented as of no effect: in short, a bare nominal primacy has been ascribed to him, destitute of all real jurisdiction and spiritual authority, with respect to the Church at large.

Such are the prevailing errors of the day, in opposition to the uniform voice of the Church in all ages. This teaches, and has ever taught, that the chair of Peter, namely the see of Rome, is the head Church from which the sacerdotal unity is derived \*, and to which, on account of its prerogative of primacy, all other churches are required to have recourse †. This declares in the solemn

“ unus; nec modo ovium sed et pastorum tu unus omnium pastor.” S. Bern. de Confid. 1. 2. c. 6.

\* “ Navigare audent ad Petri cathedram, atque ad ecclesiam principalem, unde unitas sacerdotalis exorta est.” S. Cyp. ad Corn. Pap. Ep. 53.

+ “ Ad hanc ecclesiam (a Petro & Paulo Roma fundatam) propter potiorem principalitatem necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam.” S. Iren. contra Hær. 1. 3.

decisions

decisions of general councils, that the Roman Church has a primacy of ordinary jurisdiction over all churches in quality of mother and mistress of all Christ's faithful \*, and that the Roman Pontiff has, in the person of St. Peter, received from Christ full power to feed, to rule, and to govern the whole church †.

Beware, Beloved Brethren, of those who endeavour to loosen that essential attachment you must have to the centre of unity, especially at this time of prevailing schism, and who endeavour to sow jealousies in your minds against the common father of all the faithful, whose conduct appears, in the eyes of his whole flock, to be so truly paternal, edifying, and apostolical, and do not, to make use of his own

\* " Sacra universali synodo sanctimus ut post Romanam ecclesiam, quæ, disponente Domino, super omnes alias ordinariæ potestatis obtinet principatum utpote matrem universarum Christi fidelium & magistrum, &c." Conc. Later. 4. can. 5.

+ Definimus sanctam apostolicam sedem, & Romanum Pontificem in universum orbem tenere principatum . . . . . esse successorem Petri principis apostolorum, & Christi vicarium, totiusque ecclesiæ caput . . . . & ipsi in B. Petro, pascendi, regendi & gubernandi universam ecclesiam à Domino nostro Jesu Christo plenam potestatem esse traditam, &c.

words, add fresh grief to the Church by keeping up an unnatural contest with your head\*.

If the rights and authority of the Chief Pastor, have not been respected, it is not to be wondered at, if those of subordinate prelates should have been slighted. In fact we have lamented to observe amongst the faithful committed to our charge, laymen setting up private judgment in opposition to the doctrinal instructions of their lawful pastors, assuming to themselves to pronounce upon the discipline and canons of the Church, and to interfere in the regulation of ecclesiastical government, and even calling upon the clergy to unite in a schismatical and impious resistance against their lawful bishops, to whom their conduct in general has hitherto been so respectful and exemplary. We may add that our pious and revered predecessors have been most invidiously calumniated, and our own conduct and ministry have been publicly traduced, as unjust, uncanonical, despotic, and

\* " Interim te confratresque tuos quantum in Dominio possumus, obsecramus, ne ecclesiam tantis afflictam ærumnis, novo dolore cumuletis, cui nil exitialis accidere potest quam ut membra adversus caput prælientur." B. Pius VI. ad Electores, 14 Nov. 1789.

even

even inconsistent with the security of the state.

We trust that the extravagancy of many of these assertions will prove an antidote in the minds of most persons, against their malevolent import. Still however, we find it necessary to take some notice of them. You will remember then, in the first place, Beloved Brethren, and Children in Jesus Christ, the rule you received in your early youth, for learning "what the things are that God "teaches," namely "The testimony of his "holy Catholic Church\*:" which Church speaks to us by the voice of her established Pastor. This submission of private judgment, in matters of religion, to established authority, is the distinctive character of your religion, the cement of your catholicity, and your necessary preservative against schism and heresy†. The duty of submission in the flock, is the necessary consequence of the divine authority, which has been vested in the pastors. *All power in heaven and on earth*, says Jesus Christ

has notwithstanding of sound judgment and of a child Catechism.

+ "Neque aliunde schismata oriuntur quam quod sa-  
cerdoti Dei non obtemperatur." *S. Cypr. ad Corn. Pap.*

to  
Ab Iesu Christo lo  
enique  
enique

to his apostles and their successors, is given to me, *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations . . . and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world*\*. *He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me*†. *As the Father sent me, so I send you*‡. Such is the purport of that commission, under which we claim, as it is our duty to claim, the right of announcing to our respective flocks, what is, and what is not conformable to the doctrine, to the laws and to the discipline of the Catholic Church§; which laws and which discipline

\* S. Matth. c. 28. vv. 18, 19 and 20. St. Mark c. 16.

vv. 15.

† St. Luke c. 10. v. 16.

‡ St. John, c. 20. v. 16.

§ For the instruction of our flocks we shall here insert a translation of certain passages taken from the works of a learned Canonist, where he treats of the offices and authority of bishops. “ God has appointed bishops in his “ Church, and placed them over it, for no other purpose “ than that they may govern it. This is what the apostle “ testifies *Act. c. 20, &c.* Hence it follows that the Holy “ Ghost, who has appointed bishops to the function and “ office of governing the Church of God, has vested “ them with all the power and jurisdiction which are ne- “ cessary for governing the Church, and for retaining “ all the faithful, and especially the clergy, within the “ bounds of religious morality and of ecclesiastical dis- “ cipline

discipline it belongs to the same ecclesiastical authority to administer and to regulate, which alone is competent to judge of their expediency to establish or to alter them.

With respect to those charges, which have been brought against our own personal con-

" cipline."—Hence it follows that all the faithful " in  
" as much as they have been rendered subject to the  
" Church, and incorporated in it, by baptism, whether  
" clergy or laity, of whatever condition or state of life  
" they may be, if they are desirous of attaining to ever-  
" lasting felicity, are bound to be subject to, and to obey  
" their bishops, and to be dependant upon them, in all  
" matters that relate to the administration which Christ  
" has committed to them, as are all those things that  
" belong to the order, the ministry and the discipline of  
" the Church, and to the eternal salvation of each indi-  
" vidual, which is the object and end to which the di-  
" vine authority committed to bishops is directed. This  
" is expressly commanded by the Lord, since the apostle  
" tells us, Heb. c. 13. *Obey your prelates and be subject*  
" *to them. For they watch, as being to render an account of*  
" *your souls.*"

" This therefore is a divine and an indispensable law  
" obliging all the nobles and the great ones of the earth,  
" without the exception of any one Christian, to be sub-  
" ject to the bishops and prelates of the Church. All  
" such persons in resisting the authority and rights which  
" the prelates have derived from Almighty God, would  
" draw down certain damnation upon themselves."

*Cabassutius Theoria & Praxis juris Canon. l. 4. c. 1.*

duct

duct and ministry, we shall satisfy ourselves with saying, that it has been our constant aim to conform ourselves to the laws and regulations of the Church, and that we have ever been most ready to submit our conduct to the judgment and decisions of its regular tribunals. All that we require is, that no one, either of the clergy or of the laity, should protest against or appeal from the authority itself, with which we are invested, of judging, within our respective flocks, in causes of faith or discipline, and that all appeals, in the present circumstances, should be carried before the Chief Pastor, and conducted in a canonical manner, accompanied with submission, until the sentence, which is appealed from, has been reversed by a higher authority. All this we are bound to claim in the name of the Church whose guardians we are, and to testify that an opposite conduct in any of the above mentioned particulars, cannot but be a grievous infraction of her peace, and render those who are guilty of it, unworthy of her graces and her sacraments.

We shall take no other notice of the last mentioned charge brought against us, than by exhorting you, as we have oftentimes done before, to pour out your most fervent prayers for

for the peace, safety and happiness of our beloved Sovereign and of our common country, and by cautioning you to avoid *not only for wrath, but for conscience sake\**, those seditious doctrines and practices, which you have been warned against in his Majesty's late proclamation.

It is with unfeigned and deep sorrow that we have discovered the errors, against which we have cautioned you, chiefly in the publications, which will be mentioned below. But in the discharge of that duty, which we owe to our flocks, we ought not to be influenced by any other motives, except those which arise from their spiritual necessities and dangers. Notwithstanding this, we are far from saying, in the present instance, with the apostle: *We would they were even cut off who trouble you†.* On the contrary, we rather enter into the sentiment of the same apostle, in a subsequent passage, where he says: *If a man be overtaken in any fault . . . . instruct such a one in the spirit of meekness‡.* Accordingly it is with a view of instructing those of our flocks who are liable

\* Romans c. 13. v. 5.

† Galat. c. 5. v. 12.

‡ Ibid. c. 6. v. 1.

to mislead others, no less than those who are in danger of being misled, that, amongst the many false and dangerous positions, which occur in the publications quoted beneath, we have censured the following, as containing the principal errors which we have above warned you against.

1. *The discipline of the Church requires that the bishops should be chosen by the clergy and the people over whom they are to preside\**.
2. *The appointment of bishops forms no part of his (the Pope's) spiritual commission†.*
3. *No person can pretend to say, that an application to Rome for bulls of consecration is a conscientious obligation‡.*
4. *The late regulations made in France, have taken from the court of Rome the right of confirming the bishops of that kingdom, but this resumption of the right of confirmation, affects not*

\* A Letter addressed to the Catholic Clergy of England, on the appointment of Bishops. Second edition. To which are added Farther Considerations on the same Subject, and on the conduct of the English Catholics from the reign of Queen Elizabeth to the present time. By Sir John Throckmorton, Bart. London, &c. 1792.

page 15.

† Ibid. p. 16.

‡ Ibid. p. 78.

the religion of the bishops, nor of their flocks: and if in future any bishop elect should, contrary to the rule now established, apply to Rome for bulls of confirmation, he would violate the laws of his country; and he could not pretend that the penalties he might incur, by such a proceeding, would be inflicted on account of his religion. The same must be said of the Catholic bishops in this country\*.

5. When therefore after the change of religion in this country, we were destitute of bishops, we did not fall under the immediate direction of the See of Rome. In no sense could the bishop of Rome be considered as our immediate and proper pastor†.

6. A brief of the Pope is of no authority, unless when received and admitted by the Church, to which it is addressed.

7. Too great power has generally been given to the Roman Pontiff by the canons of that council, (viz. of Trent)§.

\* A second Letter addressed to the Catholic Clergy of England on the appointment of bishops. In which the objections to the first letter are answered. By John Throckmorton, Esq. London, &c. 1791.—page 111.

† Ibid. p. 104.

‡ Ibid. A Letter, &c. Second edition, in note, p. 76.

§ Ibid. p. 14.

8. Catholics will, it is to be hoped, always follow their own judgement, which is a better guide than the mandates of either Apostolic Vicars or Nuncios\*.

9. At present therefore they (the Apostolic Vicars) are not only *pastors without a flock, but bishops without the power of the keys*.... To you, Gentlemen of the Midland and Western Districts, I particularly address myself on this occasion; it is in your power to remove the objection of the want of proper *pastors*. Do you, in conjunction with the laity of your respective districts, assemble and choose for your *bishops*, the persons who now, by a lamentable abuse, preside over you in virtue of an authority delegated to them by a foreign prelate, who has no pretensions to exercise such an act of power.... You are bodies of faithful without *bishops*†.

10. I wish the Catholics to be relieved from their present state of anarchy and oppression‡.

11. Let them (the Clergy) declare, that they will no longer submit to the arbitrary, uncanonical government of Apostolical Vicars: Let them insist on having a regular church-government, and *pastors properly appointed*§.

\* Ibid. p. 200.

† Ibid. pages 18, 19, 21, 22,

‡ Ibid. in note, p. 61.

§ Ibid. p. 71.

12. *As long as this ecclesiastical government continues, neither the principles nor the allegiance of the catholic clergy are secure\*.*

Therefore, after invoking the special light and assistance of the Spirit of truth, having consulted with diverse of our most learned divines, and maturely weighed the above quoted propositions and passages, we declare them to be respectively, *false, erroneous, scandalous, injurious to the Head of the Church and to a general council, subversive of ecclesiastical discipline, tending to schism, favoring heresy, inducing to schism and heresy, schismatical, contrary to a formal definition of a general council and to the faith of the Church.* And we hereby caution the faithful in general committed to our charge, as they tender their eternal salvation, against maintaining or adhering to the doctrines above censured; and we prohibit our clergy, in particular from preaching, teaching, maintaining or supporting any of the aforesaid condemned opinions, *under the penalty of suspension from all divine functions,* which sentence we shall consider it as our duty to watch over and to enforce.

\* *Ibid. p. 166.*

And

And whereas diverse of the same or similar propositions have been of late advanced and published amongst our flocks by other persons belonging to them in different books or writings, which on account of their obscurity, or on other accounts, we have not thought it necessary here to specify, we therefore declare that we mean to include the said propositions, as far as they agree with those which we have already cited, in the above censures.

Moreover, as the Church of God has at all times watched, with a most jealous care, over the heavenly treasure of the sacred scriptures \*, and has condemned the practice of printing the said scriptures, or any expositions of or annotations upon the same, unless such have been severally examined and approved of by due ecclesiastical authority †; hence it is incumbent upon us to warn the faithful committed to our care against the use and reception of a certain work of this kind, as far as it has yet appeared, which is destitute of these requisites, and which is entitled, *The Holy Bible, or the books accounted sacred by Jews*

\* Conc. Trid. Sess. 5. c. 1. de reform.

† Ibid. Sess. 4. decret. de edit. & usu sacr. lib.

and Christians, otherwise called the books of the old and new Covenants, faithfully translated from the originals, with various readings, explanatory notes and critical remarks, by the Rev. Alexander Geddes, LL. D.

For the rest, Dearly Beloved Brethren, we exhort you that you receive not the grace of God in vain \*, by means of which he hath called you out of darkness unto his admirable light †. Bear in mind that faith is the gift of God, and dread that severe threat which he has denounced against those who neglect to make a proper use of the time of their visitation ‡, and which we know has been strictly executed upon different portions of the Church, both in ancient and in modern times, in punishment of their sins, I say to you the kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof §.

Wherefore, Brethren, keep firm to the faith once delivered ||, and labour the more that by good works you may make your calling

\* 2 Cor. c. 6. v. 1.

† 1 S. P. c. 2. v. 9.

‡ S. Luke, c. 19. v. 44.

§ S. Matth. c. 21. v. 43.

|| S. Jude, v. 3.

and

and election sure \*. Be assiduous in performing the duty of prayer, in frequenting the holy sacraments, and in offering up or assisting at the holy sacrifice of the new law, above all, on those days, when the last mentioned duty is enjoined, as an essential means of rendering such days holy: that thus you may draw down upon yourselves the all-necessary grace of God. In order to imbibe the spirit of the gospel, daily meditate on some or other of its important maxims, and frequently read approved good books. *Redeem your iniquities with works of mercy to the poor* †, as also by fasting and abstinence, at least on those days when our provident mother the holy Church has imposed this salutary regimen upon us.

On the other hand, fly from the infection of a deluded and a deluding world, which, by the pride and licentiousness that it inspires, is equally dangerous to our faith and to our morals, and is the capital enemy to the salvation of our souls. At all times it has been necessary for good pastors, but never more so than now, to exclaim with the beloved apostle, *Love not the world, nor the things that are in the*

\* 2 S. Pet. c. 1. v. 10.

† Daniel, c. 14. v. 24.

*world.*

world. If any man love the world, the charity of the Father is not in him.—For all that is in the world, is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life; which is not of the Father, but is of the world.—And the world passeth away and the concupiscence thereof. But he that doth the will of God abideth for ever \*. And whereas this spirit of the world is acknowledged to be no where more prevalent or infectious than at theatrical shows and entertainments; hence we admonish you that the faithful in general have always been deterred, as much as possible, by zealous pastors of the Church, and the clergy in particular have been prohibited in the strictest manner † from frequenting them.

And you, our reverend Brethren and fellow-labourers in the work of the ministry, we exhort you in the words of the prince of the apostles: Feed the flock of God, which is amongst you, taking care of it, not by constraint, but willingly, according to God, and not for filthy lucre's

\* 1 S. John, c. 2. vv. 15, 16, 17.

† Conc. Laod. can. 54. Decret. 1. Diff. 23. c. 3.  
Conc. Trid. Sess. 22. c. 1. de reform. Item Sess. 24. c. 12.  
Vide etiam Mandata VV. AA.

*sake; but voluntarily\*.* Let us remember the inestimable value of the talents intrusted to us, on the good use of which, under God, the eternal salvation of souls *redeemed with the blood of Christ* absolutely depends; and, of course, the severe account we are soon to give of them to the great Master †. It is true *the days are evil ‡*; and the torrent of irreligion, of error and of vice, seems almost irresistible. Nevertheless *in doing good let us not faint, for in due time we shall reap not fainting §.* Thus proving ourselves good *pastors*, and not *hirelings* ||, when the *Prince of Pastors* shall appear we shall receive a never-fading crown \*\*.

We conclude with recommending to your fervent prayers the state of the Church of

\* 1 S. Pet. c. 5. v. 2.

† Nos talento accepto, ab eo ad negotium missi sumus. Etenim dicit: negotiamini dum venio. Ecce jam venit; ecce de nostro negotio lucrum requirit. Quale ei lucrum animarum de nostra negotiatione monstrabimus? Quot ejus conspectui animarum manipulos de prædicatio- nis nostræ segete allaturi sumus? S. Greg. Hom. 17. in Evan.

‡ Ephes. c. 5. v. 16.

§ Galat. c. 6. v. 9.

|| S. John, c. 10.

\*\* 1 S. Pet. c. 5. v. 4.

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God throughout the world, the peace and welfare of this nation, and our own particular spiritual necessities. In return, we bestow upon you our pastoral benediction.—*May the peace of God, which surpasseth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus* \*.

CHARLES WALMESLEY, VICAR APOSTOLIC.

WILLIAM GIBSON, VICAR APOSTOLIC.

JOHN DOUGLASS, VICAR APOSTOLIC.

December 26, 1792.

\* Philip. 4. 7.

[ 2 ]

God throughout this world, the better and  
Worthy of this nation, say out ony particular  
privileyed occillies. In which we plesed the  
ou you our leffors, penitition.—We the  
peopell of God, saye yea to all particular  
privileyed occillies, in Christ Jesus.

CHARLES WATKINSON, Vice, Astronomic.

WATKINSON, Vice, Astronomic.

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JOHN DUGIVIS, Vice, Astronomic.

January 26, 1785.

Philip C. F.